



Children's Trust Fund of Michigan Progress Report

January 2006 – January 2009



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I. Financial Accountability and Viability

a. Prior Financial Concerns

- i. In January 2006, CTF had multiple overdue, unpaid bills (e.g., \$30,000 bill for Ashman Court Inn in Midland for annual conference).
- ii. CTF's use of the P-card (office credit card) was so problematic it had been revoked several times by the state.
- iii. CTF also had a serious lack of accurate financial reporting and verifiable account coding.

b. Financial Progress Made

- i. *Unreserved Fund Balance:* CTF has kept administrative spending within or under budget the past three years while maintaining and increasing prevention grant spending. As a result, CTF's unreserved fund balance increased from \$1.2 million to \$1.7 million (38%) funds available either as a contingency against charitable giving shortfalls due to Michigan's economy or increases in future prevention grants.
- ii. *Increased Program Spending:* Despite difficult economic times and operating restrictions within state government in general and the Department Human Services in particular, CTF maintained income levels to increase program grant allocations.
- iii. *Financial Reporting:* CTF financial reporting and account coding were created and restructured including financial statements which are now transparent and compliant with reporting requirements. Financial statements now reflect budget to actual variances and also show impact on fund balance, both reserved and unreserved.
- iv. *Budget Process:* Unlike previous budgets, CTF presented and realized balanced budgets for FY2006 through FY2009. CTF also instituted the practice of board approval for budget amendments when there were indications of budget concerns.

II. Fund Development & Marketing

- a. Signature Event: CTF has had increasingly successful Signature Events over the last three years. In 2008, the Signature Event increased revenue and decreased expenses for the first time in the history of this event. At a time when charitable giving is down nationally and statewide, CTF realized record net revenue from the 2008 Signature Event.
- b. Tax check-off: CTF bucked the national trend of declining check-off revenues. CTF has experienced growth in income tax check-off donations as a result of integrated marketing.
- c. License plate: A new CTF logo was designed and is currently being used on CTF specialty license plates. CTF is actively working to establish integrated marketing and branding strategies for the tax check-off, license plate, and Child Abuse Prevention Month.
- d. Investments: To preserve the purchasing power of the CTF investment earnings, CTF established a new asset allocation to increase equities to 40% by June 30, 2009. Equity allocation percentage increased from 2% to 21% from September 30, 2005, to June 30, 2008.

- e. Other Initiatives: CTF established a donor database where none previously existed. CTF also held a 25th anniversary fundraising event (the first non-Signature Event fundraiser) private residence in 2007 featuring United States Senator and CTF founder Debbie Stabenow.

III. Programmatic

a. Direct Services

- i. CTF has been able to retain full funding for direct service grants.
- ii. Starting with FY2008 grantees, potential grantees completing the RFP process were required to evaluate their level of evidence-based or evidence-informed programs and practices using the federal Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) guidelines. This new requirement is assisting CTF in evaluating the level of evidence behind newly-funded programs which in turn increases the effectiveness of prevention work and provides donors and other funders with needed measurability and accountability.
- iii. CTF is working with grantees to increase their evaluation and outcome capabilities. This will include more comprehensive use of protective factors and possibly a FRIENDS (the National Resource Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention) protective factors survey.

b. Local Councils

- i. Following a meeting with local councils, at which councils' expressed multiple concerns related to administrative and communication practices between councils and CTF (mostly based on issues prior to 2006 and the consequences of an outdated system of regional coordination), CTF took several successful initiatives in partnership with local councils to improve practices and outcomes for councils each of which were implemented. These included forming three temporary work groups (Designation Work Group, Education Work Group, and Best Practices Work Group), all of which made concrete grassroots recommendations about CTF. CTF also discontinued the largely outmoded, ineffective and costly system of regional coordination.
- ii. In October 2008, a standing Local Council Work Group was formed. The work group operates as a monthly forum in which to share information about CTF and DHS processes, training and technical assistance, CTF events and initiatives (such as CAP Month and the Signature Event), and best practices. Many dozen local councils regularly participate in this key communication venue.

- iii. Three new local councils were established/restored in 2008. CTF is working with Lenawee County to establish a local council which for the first time in CTF's history will result in local councils covering all 83 counties.
- iv. CTF implemented a competitive process for ten local councils to move from Tier I to Tier II status. Starting in FY2009, ten councils moved from \$5,000 to \$10,000 annual grants based on their higher levels of functioning and prevention program practices.

c. Demonstration Grants

- i. CTF instituted its first-ever demonstration grants in 25 years.
- ii. *Safe Delivery*: In 2006, CTF funded the Safe Delivery of Newborns program. The Safe Delivery law, effective January 1, 2001, was enacted to provide parents a safe, anonymous alternative to abandonment of their unwanted newborn within 72 hours of birth. To increase awareness of this law, a Safe Delivery team developed public and professional awareness campaigns and training emergency service providers (ESP) and others. Total funding was \$35,000 in two grants.
- iii. *Michigan Model for Health*: CTF funded the production of safety curriculum to be used in schools statewide. Total funding was \$150,000 over three years.
- iv. *Mayor's Time*: CTF funded the Annual After-School Back to School Enrollment Fair that served all Detroit Area Public Schools and provided information about local services and child abuse and neglect prevention to parents, teachers, and other stakeholders. Total funding was \$50,000.

d. Temporary & Standing Work Groups

- i. As previously noted, three temporary work groups and one standing Local Council Work Group were formed to address local council issues. In addition, a Child Abuse Prevention Month Work Group and a Parent Leadership Work Group were formed in 2008. These work groups include representatives from local councils, direct services, staff, board members and other stakeholders.

e. Evidence-Based and Evidence-Informed Programs and Practices (EBP/EIP)

- i. CTF has rapidly moved toward greater knowledge and utilization of EBP/EIP, based on Board initiatives as well as federal directives. In 2007, CTF hired a consultant to provide a best practices report. In 2007 and 2008, CTF annual trainings focused on providing grantees with education on EBP/EIP as well as data collection/analysis and outcome accountability.

CTF will continue to provide ongoing and comprehensive training to grantees on these initiatives.

- ii. As of FY2006 reporting, CTF is measuring the number of direct service programs that are evidence-informed or evidence-based. Also, the most weighted scoring criteria for local council tier movement in FY2008 was the level of evidence or research behind programming and practices. Further, CTF has made significant revisions to the EGrAMS program register (the data collection component of EGrAMS) to increase the accuracy of data reported.
- iii. CTF has significantly increased involvement with FRIENDS, the federal CBCAP T/TA provider, to help with the implementation and education of EBP/EIP. This was an untapped resource prior to 2007.

f. Citizen Review Panel for Prevention (CRP)

- i. As of 2006, the CRP (which the CTF Board agreed to oversee in 1998) was largely disbanded and was not operational. In 2007, the CRP was rebuilt with all new members and a new chair (who is a CTF board member). The CRP has been meeting bimonthly to provide recommendations to DHS (on an annual basis) on how to improve prevention and child welfare services. The CRP plans to hold a joint meeting with the other two CRPs in February 2009.

g. Training & Technical Assistance

i. *Annual Trainings*

- 1. Despite a 50 percent budget decrease for training from FY2007, CTF held two successful annual trainings in FY2008 and FY2009. The training has become more focused on best practice training, including evidence-based and evidence-informed practice, logic models, outcomes, data collection, and successful collaboration and fund development. Comments from the 2008 annual training included, “I couldn’t believe the difference from 1-2 years ago—great progress—reason to be hopeful for the future with CTF. Thanks for all the work,” “Very affirming with several ideas that I think will help me do even better,” and “The information will aid me in my position across all programs.” Overall evaluation results from these last two annual trainings show marked improvement over previous years.
- 2. CTF plans to hold an innovative training in FY 2010 in conjunction with Michigan State University and the conference “Consumer Culture and the Ethical Treatment of Children.”

ii. *EGrAMS Trainings*

1. At the beginning of 2006, EGrAMS (a web-based grant application and reporting system required by the state) had serious system errors and was even temporarily suspended for local councils. CTF was also not providing sufficient training or technical assistance for grantees. In late 2006 and beyond, CTF began to offer EGrAMS trainings, both regionally and at the annual training. Training and technical assistance intensified significantly in 2008, when the majority of councils were offered one-on-one technical assistance (via phone and at on-site trainings) for their quarterly EGrAMS reports. Notably, between 2007 and 2008 there was a 30 percent increase in satisfaction from end-users with the EGrAMS technical assistance provided by CTF staff.
2. At the 2008 annual training, CTF shared a revised version of the EGrAMS program register with local councils for feedback and suggested revisions. These additional changes are being made and will be piloted with councils before going into effect in January 2009. Councils will receive additional training in 2009 on the new and improved program register.
3. Because of its increasingly positive experience with EGrAMS, CTF has been asked to be an unpaid consultant to other states now adopting the EGrAMS system as well as the National Alliance of Children's Trust Funds.

iii. *PART & Logic Model Trainings*

1. CTF has provided local councils and direct service grantees with PART trainings. In particular, CTF staff provided step-by-step technical assistance for direct service grantees required to complete federal PART data for CTF funding eligibility.
2. CTF has provided local councils and direct service grantees with logic model trainings. Trainings were provided at the 2007 and 2008 annual trainings, and an online logic model course was made available to local councils, which approximately 50 councils utilized. CTF staff will also conduct logic model trainings in December 2008 and into 2009.

IV. **Additional Areas of Increased Capacity and Performance**

a. **Staffing**

- i. In January 2006, staff morale was low accompanied by multiple vacancies in CTF staffing. Since then, CTF has filled three new positions to become fully staffed as of June 30, 2008. The three new positions—a program director, senior program development coordinator, and local council grant coordinator—have allowed for more timely, coordinated, comprehensive, and intensive services for the field and program operations. Filling these positions with the best available applicants has also allowed other CTF staff to engage more fully in their job responsibilities. In particular, filling the local council grant coordinator position responded to a critical need identified by local councils.
- ii. According to staff responses to internal surveys, staff morale, productivity, team cohesion and job satisfaction has greatly increased since 2006, with the highest level of satisfaction being reported at the end of 2008.
- iii. Staff is no longer taken away from program and administrative duties to work on Signature Event, due to successful restructuring and appropriate use of staff members' time.
- iv. CTF has successfully utilized interns on the Signature Event, primary prevention research, and general office assistance. A new intern will be starting in January 2009 to assist with the Citizen Review Panel for Prevention.

b. Federal Compliance

- i. In March 2006, the CTF executive director was informed by federal officials that CTF's federal grant report was problematic. Since January 2007, CTF has been in high compliance with federal Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) grant reporting. This includes reporting on newly-required PART data, which is related to evidence-based programming. Federal officials now report that CTF's grant applications and reports are among the best in the nation.

c. Board Development

- i. In January 2006, there were no active board committees or meaningful materials prepared for board meetings. There are now five board committees that meet prior to board meetings and whose members discuss, process, and recommend relevant, staff-driven organizational initiatives. Board books are also prepared prior to each quarterly board meeting and contain extensive documentary and briefing information. Some problems in board functioning remain, notably board leadership, board compliance with Open Meetings Act requirements, greater independence from the Department of Human Services and an appropriate understanding of the distinction between board

governance and administrative operations, which can hopefully be addressed in the near future.

d. Biennial Report

- i. The CTF biennial report, required by statute, was successfully completed and distributed in the fall of 2006 (a biennial report had not been produced since 1998). The report is used to communicate with legislators, stakeholders, grantees, and current and prospective fund development donors. The next report is currently in production and those portions relating to the next biennial state prevention plan are being developed with grantees and external stakeholders.

e. Collaboration

- i. CTF has significantly increased participation and collaboration with state and national partners, particularly in 2007 and 2008. CTF staff members serve on approximately 15 committees or work groups, including the Child Welfare Improvement Task Force, the federal PART work group, the federal Peer Review work group, the Zero to Five Advocacy Network, Parenting Awareness Michigan, and the State Child Death Review Team.
- ii. CTF staff specifically took the initiative to reestablish the CRP for Prevention, to serve on the Child Welfare Improvement Task Force, to serve on the federal Peer Review and PART work groups, to bring our federal FRIENDS trainer to present at annual trainings (at no cost to CTF), to hold meetings with the Michigan United Way, and to become involved in the federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) process. CTF staff also implemented joint parent leadership meetings with ECIC, 0-3, and other stakeholders in 2008, an initiative which is growing and moving into 2009. The CTF executive director participated in a planning committee for the 2009 national conference on child abuse and neglect.
- iii. In collaboration with the Michigan Department of Treasury, CTF agreed on a new investment strategy in 2006 to grow the fund and to increase market value of the trust fund in order to keep up with inflation. CTF continues to work with the department to monitor income tax check-off and license plate revenues, and to make changes to the investment strategy as necessary.

f. Communications

- i. *News Briefs*: Starting in August 2007 and each month thereafter, CTF began writing and distributing monthly *News Briefs* for CTF local councils, direct service grantees, and other partners. This communication tool was a result of needs identified by local councils and the Education Work Group. The *News Briefs* have proven to be an effective tool to communicate information about CTF and grantee events and initiatives, federal and nationwide information

and opportunities, technical assistance and tips for EGrAMS and other reporting concerns, and much more.

- ii. *Annual Satisfaction Survey:* In the fall of 2006, CTF began an annual survey of CTF grantees to receive input on direction for continued improvements and quality services. Over the last three years, there has been overall positive growth in satisfaction from grantees. For example, results from the fall 2008 survey demonstrated that overall satisfaction with CTF communications (as reported by local councils and direct services combined) increased by approximately 20 percent over 2007. There was also a there was an increase in views of CTF is a voice for prevention and a 30 percent increase in the satisfaction of EGrAMS technical assistance provided by CTF staff.
- iii. *Website:* The CTF website was launched in March of 2006. The website is a valuable resource for sharing upcoming events, training opportunities, national resources, and communications and has received almost 50,000 visits since being launched.
- iv. *Work Groups:* The numerous work groups listed above are used with high effectiveness in CTF communications. Grantee and stakeholder feedback has indicated satisfaction with this mode of communication.
- v. *Site Visits:* The CTF executive director and CTF staff have visited more than 60 local councils and 10 direct service grantees, several more than once, in the past three years. Recently, CTF has been working closely with the Mayors' Task Force on child abuse and neglect prevention (Detroit, Highland Park, Hamtramack, Harper Woods, The Gross Pointe's) to increase capacity of the local council.
- vi. *Michigan State University Partnership:* CTF has successfully put together a major first-of its-kind partnership with MSU's Department of Advertising, Public Relations, and Retailing. This three-year, million dollar partnership, jointly funded by CTF and MSU, will bring the full weight of the nation's largest academic advertising program into the fight against child abuse and neglect.
- vii. *CTF Ambassadors:* CTF successfully recruited three-time world heavyweight boxing champ Muhammad Ali and his wife Lonnie as CTF Ambassadors.

V. Zero to Three Prevention Initiative

a. Increased Appropriations

- i. CTF administers the Zero to Three interagency agreement. The Governor's FY2009 budget held Zero to Three funding at FY2008 levels (\$6,649,000), representing a 39.3% increase over FY2006 funding. In April 2008, CTF

held a competitive, statewide Request for Proposal for Zero to Three funding for FY2009-2011. Over 50 reviewers were involved in the scoring process, and 35 of the applications were rated strong enough to be funded. Forty-seven Michigan counties will be served.

b. Program Outcomes:

- i. In FY 2008, 99.41% of the at-risk families participating in Zero to Three did not have CPS involvement and 99.86% of families that completed Zero to Three services did not have CPS involvement. Zero to Three strengthens Michigan families and is cost effective. The total cost of providing Zero to Three Secondary Prevention services is about \$10 per family per day versus \$57 per child per day once child abuse and neglect has been substantiated and the child enters the child welfare system. Zero to Three saves Michigan taxpayers an estimated \$43 million per year. That's a return on investment of 479%.